

**IOWA HEAD START AND
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**INTERAGENCY
MEMORANDUM
OF
UNDERSTANDING**

2002



State of Iowa
Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0146

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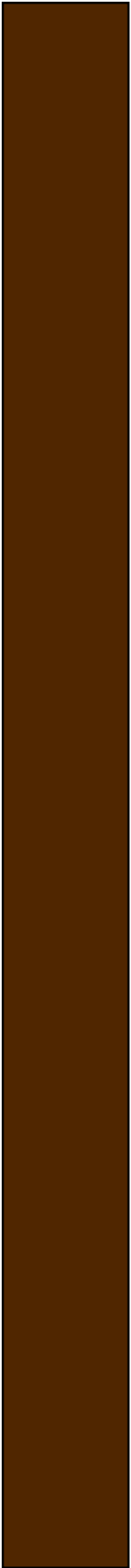
**Division of Early Childhood, Elementary
and Secondary Education**

Judy Jeffrey, Administrator

Bureau of Children, Family and Community Services

Lana Michelson, Interim Bureau Chief
Julie Curry, Early ACCESS Technical Assistant
Jorge Garcia, Head Start, Region VII QIC-D
Barbara Lawrence, Head Start, Region VII QIC-D
Penny Milburn, Consultant
Mary Schertz, Consultant
Anita Varne, Consultant
Sharon Willis, Graphic Artist/Communications

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IOWA HEAD START
AND
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INTERAGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

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PREFACE

Over the course of several months, a task force of Iowa agency/organization stakeholders, dedicated to providing high quality services to families with young children with disabilities, met to discuss the coordination of a wide variety of services across agencies. The goal of these meetings was to develop a framework for inter-agency collaboration. As difficult issues were discussed, participants were determined to develop creative solutions. The work of this group has contributed a richness to the interagency collaboration which will have a lasting effect on young children with disabilities and their families in Iowa.

The purpose of this document is twofold. The first is to facilitate the ongoing collaboration between the Iowa Department of Education, the Region VII Department of Health and Human Services - Administration for Children and Families - Office of Community Operations, the Iowa Head Start Association, Iowa Area Education Agencies, the Iowa Head Start Collaboration Office, and Region VII Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities.

The second is to facilitate the ongoing collaborative efforts of local agencies/organizations implementing Parts B/C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Early Head Start/Head Start programs. This process is guided by the Head Start Program Performance Standards (Head Start Performance Standards, Regulations and Guidance: 45 CFR, Parts 1301-1304; and Guidance 1305, 1306, and 1308), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Iowa Administrative Rules, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is understood that each signatory agency/organization is under obligation to the mandates and regulations governing each specific agency/organization. In addition, each signatory agency will provide technical assistance to the local agencies in developing a local memorandum.

While this document addresses issues related to young children with disabilities and their families, we encourage agencies/organizations participating in this process to promote the integration of all early childhood programs. This integration of services may be achieved by enhancing the coordination and awareness of programs and resources that address the needs of all young children in Iowa. Examples include, but are not limited to, Child Care Resource & Referral, Early Care Health and Education programs, Even Start, WIC, etc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Iowa Department of Education; the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Operations; the Iowa Head Start Association; the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Children, Families & Community Services; the Iowa Head Start Collaboration Office; and the Region VII, Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities, gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the dedicated members of this task force and other Head Start Agency staff and parents who reviewed this document and assisted with this work.

Kathy Cameron

Early ACCESS Regional Coordinator
Region 9

Julie Curry

Early ACCESS Technical Assistant

Mark Draper

Administrator
Area Education Agency 13

Jorge Garcia

KU/Quality Improvement Center
for Disabilities

Dianne Halverson

IHSA VP/Northeast Iowa Community
Action Corporation

Linda Holloway

Administrator
Area Education Agency 11

Mary Johnson-Gerard

MOA Consultant

Barbara Lawrence

KU/Quality Improvement Center
for Disabilities

Sue Miller

Tri-County Head Start

Penny Milburn

Iowa Department
of Education

Gary Petersen

Administrator
Area Education Agency 5

Mary Schertz

Iowa Department
of Education

Georgia Sheriff

IHSA/Drake University
Head Start

Anita Varne

Head Start Collaboration Office
Iowa Department of Education

Interagency Memorandum of Understanding

The Iowa Department of Education
and
Region VII Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Community Operations
and
The Iowa Head Start Association

Purpose

This Interagency Collaboration Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provides a framework for the signatory agencies to continue their efforts to meet individual agency/organization responsibilities and expectations regarding quality early intervention/special education and related services to young children and their families.

In signing this MOU the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Head Start Association commit to collaborating on administrative, programmatic, and/or professional development responsibilities relating to the following nine (9) components of program implementation. Refer to pages 8-10 for further clarification of these categories.

- Child find;
- Screening including referral;
- Evaluation;
- Family involvement;
- IEP's/IFSP's;
- Early intervention or special education and related services;
- Eligibility and/or Entitlement;
- Transition;
- Staff/Parent development.

The following outcomes, or areas of collaboration, are the basis of this MOU.

- Signatory agencies/organizations provide the framework to develop outcome-based local Interagency Collaboration MOA's based on needs assessment data and which identify criteria for assessing effectiveness.
- Signatory agencies/organizations provide support and guidance, as appropriate, to local agencies that serve children with disabilities and their families with early intervention or special education and related services in the least restrictive or natural environment (LRE/NE).
- Signatory agencies/organizations support and guide the collaborative work to meet the developmental or educational needs of children with disabilities and their families.

SIGNATORY AGENCIES

Iowa Department of Education

Date

Region VII Department of Health and Human
Services - Administration for Children and
Families, Office of Community Operations

Date

The Iowa Head Start Association

Date

Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities
Head Start T/TA

Date

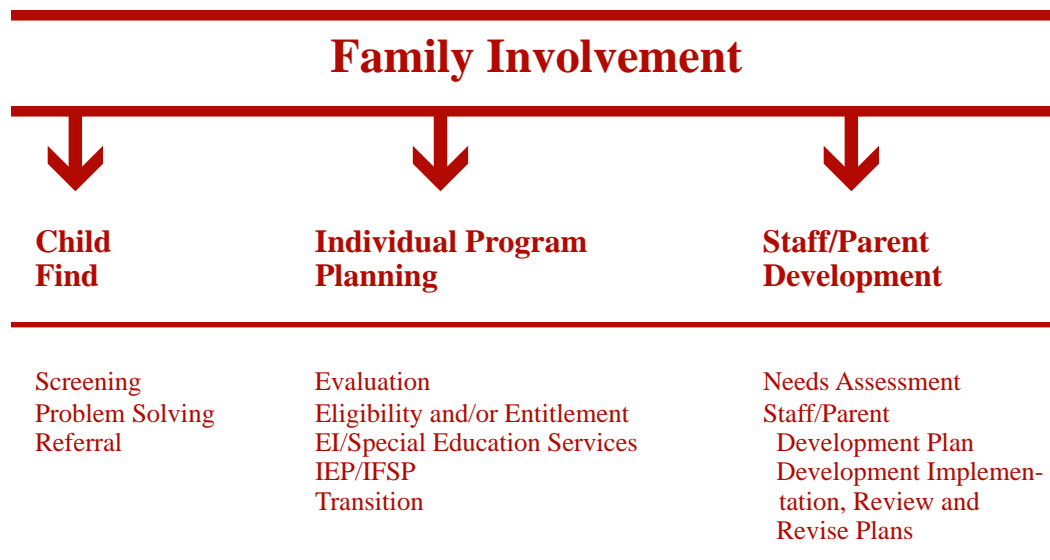
INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION MOA FRAMEWORK

Federal Head Start Regulations [1308.4(I)] identify specific areas that must be addressed in a local Interagency Agreement. These are:

- (1) Child find;
- (2) Joint training of staff and parents;
- (3) Referral procedures for evaluations, IEP/IFSP meetings, and placement decisions;
- (4) Transition;
- (5) Resource sharing;
- (6) Head Start commitment to provide the number of children receiving services under IEP to the Local Education Agency/Area Education Agency (LEA/AEA) for the child count report upon request annually;
- (7) Any other items agreed to by both parties.

IDEA, Parts B & C, regulations stipulate that any child with a disability will be served in the least restrictive environment (LRE) or natural environment (NE) to the degree appropriate.

The framework provided here builds upon the nine components referenced on page 4 and breaks them into three functional categories: Child find, Individual Program Planning, and Staff/Parent Development. The following diagram on page 7 depicts this categorization. Family involvement is so critical to the process that it is singled out as an over arching component of the model and as such should be addressed in each element of the categories.



The current signing parties for each local MOA can develop/update their local Interagency Memorandum of Agreement using a six-step process. The following six steps will assist:

1. The current signing parties determine stakeholders who should be involved in the development of the MOA. Communities may want to include community partners other than the LEA, AEA, Early Head Start, Head Start, and Parts B/C constituents. Examples of possible stakeholders to include are: local health agencies, childcare providers, resource & referral agencies, etc.
2. Schedule a planning meeting and invite stakeholders.
3. Facilitate a planning meeting which includes these agenda items:
 - Discuss purpose of a MOA;
 - Distribute MOA Framework documents and review sections;
 - Identify participants commitment to collaboration;
 - Facilitate a discussion on how to proceed with the MOA;
 - Identify roles & responsibilities of stakeholders, and;
 - Schedule future meeting(s).
4. During subsequent meetings, complete planning forms (see “MOA planning form”) and incorporate information into the MOA.
5. Acquire appropriate signatures.
6. Meet yearly with stakeholders to review MOA and assess status of collaboration.

MOA Planning Forms

These forms are designed to guide stakeholders in identifying the areas of collaboration in each of the required Head Start components. These forms may be completed by each agency/organization prior to beginning work on the MOA or during the process. When this framework is used by the stakeholders group all of the nine required components, as referenced on page 4, will be addressed. Stakeholders may choose to address other components, as needed, to provide collaborative services in their area.

The framework reflects Iowa language. For example, all the boxes contained in this matrix do not come directly from Head Start regulations. Problem solving is a component found in the Iowa Administrative Rules of Special Education and would be an optional component depending on the procedures for special education identification with the AEAs and Early ACCESS regions. Again, please make this work for your specific locality.

Good plans have clear outcomes. Multiple questions under each category are provided to guide your discussions. Addressing these questions will result in identifying local measures which will assist you in assessing the effectiveness of your collaboration.

Child Find:

Do families have access to culturally relevant materials and information that inform and promote referral to Early ACCESS or special education?

How does your local data inform you about the effectiveness of your child find activities? For example are you serving two percent of the infant and toddler population in your region? Are you serving five percent of your age 3-5 population?

Do all eligible infants and toddlers and their families receive effective and appropriate service coordination upon referral?

Does the implementation of child find activities result in the identification, evaluation and assessment of all eligible or entitled children?

How are children referred and identified?

How are families made aware of the referral and identification process?

Individual Program Planning

Are the needs of children with disabilities determined based on information from an appropriate evaluation?

Does the evaluation and assessment of infants and toddlers and family needs lead to identification of all child needs, as well as all family needs related to enhancing the development of the child?

How knowledgeable are families and providers about eligibility for Early ACCESS or entitlement for special education?

How does the data inform us about our IFSP/IEP decision making process, resulting in services being provided in natural environment/LRE appropriate to the child?

Are services available to meet the unique individual needs of children with disabilities and their families?

Are families receiving information and training to address the needs of their child?

Does the family centered service coordination effectively facilitate ongoing timely early intervention services in the natural environment for infants and toddlers?

What procedures exist that assure appropriate stakeholders are involved in an effective transition planning process?

Are all children, eligible for Part B services, receiving special education and related services by their third birthday?

Are all children, not eligible for special education services, receiving other appropriate services by their third birthday?

Staff/Parent Development

Do service coordinators and providers have the special knowledge and skills needed to address the developmental needs of their children, including behavioral needs?

Do providers have the special knowledge and skills needed to address the developmental needs of their children, to assure services in the least restrictive environment?

Do service coordinators and providers have the special knowledge and skills need to address the developmental needs of their children, including behavioral needs?

How are families involved as participants and presenters of staff development?

How have you assessed the needs of local providers to address the special knowledge and skills needed to serve the unique needs of children with disabilities and their families, including those with local incidence disabilities?

Do staff development opportunities allow families to meet the developmental needs of their children?

How do families participate in planning staff development?

Does the staff development planning process address the areas of procedural safeguards (including confidentiality), the referral process, eligibility determination, IEP/IFSP development, services, and transition?

Does this staff development plan assist in achieving the outcomes of the local agreement?

How will the staff development plan be evaluated?

Planning Forms

Collaboration Category (Child Find)

| Child Find | Regulations | Agency Activities | Collaborative Activities |
|--------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Screening | Sp Ed 41.47(2) HSPS 1304.20(b) & (f)(2)(ii) HSPS 1308.4(a)-(f)(1) HSPS 1308.5(a) HSPS 1308.6(a)(1); (b) & (c) | | |
| 2. Problem Solving | Sp Ed 41.47(3) Sp Ed 41.88(1)-(3) & (5) | | |
| 3. Referral | Sp Ed 41.48 HSPS 1304.20(f) HSPS 1308.4(f)(2) & (g) HSPS 1308.6 (e) | | |

Key: HSPS = Head Start Performance Standards 1301-1311
 Sp Ed = IA Administrative Rules of Special Education

Collaboration Category (Individual Program Planning)

| Individual Program Planning | Regulations | Agency Activities | Collaborative Activities |
|--|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Evaluation | Sp Ed 41.48(3)-(5) Sp Ed 41.49 HSPS 1304.20(f)(1) HSPS 1308.6(d)(e) | | |
| 2. Eligibility-Entitlement-Placement Process | Sp Ed 41.50(1)(2) HSPS 1304.3(a)(2) HSPS 1308.5(c) HSPS 1308.6(e)(5) HSPS 1308.19(a) | | |
| 3. EI/SPED Services | | | |
| 4. Birth-3 yrs. | HSPS 1304.20(f)(2)(i) HSPS 1304.21(a)(ii) | | |
| 3-5 yrs. | Sp Ed 41.39 Sp Ed 41.82 Sp Ed 41.82(1)(b) Sp Ed 41.98 HSPS 1308.3(I) HSPS 1308.3(J) HSPS 1308.19(i)(j)(k) | | |
| 5. IEP | Sp Ed 41.50(5) Sp Ed 41.62(1) Sp Ed 41.67 HSPS 1304.20(f)(2)(iv) HSPS 1308.3(i) HSPS 1308.5(d) HSPS 1308.19(b)(c)(d)(e) | | |
| 6. IFSP | HSPS 1304.20(c)(4) HSPS 1304.20(f)(2)(ii) HSPS 1304.21(a)(ii) | | |

Collaboration Category (Individual Program Planning cont.)

| Individual Program Planning | Regulations | Agency Activities | Collaborative Activities |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 7. Transition Services | | | |
| 3 yrs. | Ch Sp Ed 41.75 HSPS 1308.4(f)(g) HSPS 1304.20 (f)(2)(iii) | | |
| 5 yrs. - School Age | HSPS 1308.21(b)(c) | | |

Key: HSPS = Head Start Performance Standards 1301-1311
Sp Ed = IA Administrative Rules of Special Education

Collaboration Category (Staff/Parent Development)

| Staff/ Parent Development | Regulations | Agency Activities | Collaborative Activities |
|---|---|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Staff/Parent Development Needs Assessment | | | |
| 2. Staff/Parent Development Plan | Sp Ed 41.18(6) Sp Ed 41.29 Sp Ed 41.102 | | |
| A. Staff/Parent Development of Plan | HSPS 1308.21(a)(6) | | |
| B. Staff/Parent Implementation of Plan | | | |
| C. Staff/Parent Review & Revision of Plan | | | |

Key: HSPS = Head Start Performance Standards 1301-1311

DEFINITIONS

Assessment

The ongoing procedure used by appropriate qualified personnel, throughout the period of a child's eligibility, in order to identify the child's unique strengths and needs.

Eligibility for Early ACCESS:

A child, birth through two years of age is eligible for Early ACCESS (Part C) in Iowa based upon Iowa's definition of developmental delay. (Reference Early Access definition of developmental delay.)

Entitled for Special Education:

A child, who, upon the completion of a full and individual evaluation has been determined by the IEP team to be a child with a disability, and whose required educational intervention constitutes the provision of special education and related services. An individual, ages birth to 5, may be an entitled individual. For children, ages birth to 3 who are entitled to special education, an IFSP team determines the needed resources and services.

Evaluation:

A procedure used by appropriate qualified personnel to determine a child's initial and continuing eligibility under IDEA. Special education defines an evaluation as a full individual evaluation for the purpose of identifying educational interventions that are required in order for the individual to benefit from education.

Family Involvement:

The process of including families in child identification, individual program planning, and parent/staff development.

IEP:

Individual Education Program as outlined in IDEA Part B and Iowa rules of special education. This is a plan to meet the child's unique educational needs.

IFSP:

Individualized Family Service Plan as outlined in IDEA Part C and Iowa Administrative Rules for Early ACCESS. This is a plan to support the family in meeting the unique needs of their child's growth and development.

Intervention:

A set of strategies and/or objectives to address the developmental or educational needs of a child eligible for services.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):

Ensure, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are nondisabled.

Natural Environment:

To the maximum extent appropriate a child eligible for early intervention services through Part C must receive services in settings where children without disabilities live, learn, and play.

Placement:

The act of determining the setting where a continuum of services may be delivered. The continuum of services is designed to meet the needs of an entitled individual.

Problem Solving Approach:

A process that is used to examine the nature and severity of an educationally related problem. These procedures primarily focus on variables related to developing effective educationally relevant interventions (Refer to Iowa Rules of Special Education).

Staff/Parent Development Plan:

A document developed by an agency/organization that identifies their needs for training, outcomes, strategies, and criteria for measuring parent and professional growth. A parent/staff development plan would be based on needs assessment data, clear outcomes, and contain three sections:

- development
- implementation
- review and revision

Referral:

Notifying an agency or entity that a child may be eligible, and/or entitled, for their program or services.

Screening:

A procedure used by appropriate personnel to determine if a child may have developmental concerns and need further evaluation.

Special Education:

Specially designed instruction at no cost to the family, to meet the unique needs of an entitled individual. This includes instruction conducted in the school, home, hospital, institution, or other settings.

Transition:

An outcome oriented process that promotes movement of a child from one early childhood setting to another. This may include, but is not limited to, Early ACCESS to a center-based early childhood program such, as Head Start or early childhood special education to kindergarten.

WEB SITE RESOURCES

These resources can assist you in developing your local Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

Federal Regulations Web sites

- **Head Start Performance Standards:**

http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/regs/regs/rg_index.html

- **Part C Regulations:**

Html format: <http://www.nectas.unc.edu/idea/303regs.asp>

Pdf format: <http://www.nectas.unc.edu/idea/pdfs/303abc.pdf>

- **Part B Regulations:**

Html format: <http://www.nectas.unc.edu/idea/300regs.asp>

Pdf format: <http://www.nectas.unc.edu/idea/pdfs/pl105-17partB.pdf>

- **ADA:**

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>

- **Federal regulations Side by Side** of Head Start Performance Standards, IDEA Parts B & C

<http://www.mhsdsqic.org/english/index/pubs/index.html>

Iowa Rules Web sites

- **Rules for Special Education:**

<http://www.state.ia.us/educate/rules/speced/index.html>

- **Rules for Early ACCESS**

<http://www.state.ia.educate/>

- **Rules Side by Side:** Head Start Performance Standards with Iowa Rules for Special Education and Early ACCESS

<http://www.state.ia.educate/>

Program and Service Web sites

- **Head Start Bureau - Administration for Children and Families
US Department of Health and Human Services**

<http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/>

- **Iowa Head Start Association:**

www.iowaheadstart.org

- **Region VII Quality Improvement Center:**

www.r7hsteam.org

- **3-4-5 Thrive manual:**

www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/cfcs/thrive345/index.html

- **Early ACCESS**

<http://www.state.ia.educate/>

- **Early Childhood Special Education**

www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/cfcs/thrive345/index.html



MOA Assistant

- Part II sections throughout the Rules Side by Side (referenced above) have specific recommended practices for accomplishing outcomes for child find, eligibility, evaluation, individual plans, services and transition. These may assist you in identifying effective activities for your MOA.